

# EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP

## 8.2 Blessing for a Home, provisional

*Blessing for a Home is a celebration of vocation in the deepest and broadest sense. We bless and thank God for the gift of a home while engaging and honoring the ways people practice their faith in their life at home: chores and hobbies, cooking and eating, ways of relaxing, relationships within the household and beyond it, caring for our bodies, connecting with the creation.*

*Blessing for a Home is commonly used when people move into a new residence. Besides the geographical moves that households make, other examples include moving into a nursing home or a dormitory room. The service may also be used to mark a change in the membership of a household: for example, an elderly parent moves in with younger relatives; a foster child comes into the home; a single-parent household is formed after a divorce. In some traditions, a blessing for a home is an annual observance—for example, during the time after Epiphany.*

*This order is meant to provide a pattern to follow, not an exact script. The basic pattern involves moving around the home and stopping at various places for scripture and prayer. Those planning for this rite may feel free to choose from the options here, rearrange them as makes best sense in the context, and add other stopping places as desired (selecting an appropriate scripture passage and crafting a suitable prayer).*

*Symbols may be used to mark the journey. Remembrances of baptism, such as carrying a candle from place to place or sprinkling water at each stopping place, recall that the life of the baptized is lived within these places. Carrying a cross from place to place, perhaps a cross that will hang on one of the walls, is a reminder that those who live here are called to follow in the way of the cross also in their daily lives.*

*Leadership may be shared among members of the household, friends and relatives, and the pastor or others from the faith community.*

## GATHERING

*When all have gathered in a convenient place, the leader begins.*

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

*or*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,  
who spreads forth the heavens like a tent,  
who shelters our lives,  
who comes to make a home with us.

**Amen.**

Peace to this *house/dwelling/room* and to all who enter here.

Friends in Christ: Today we bless God and we seek God's blessing as we gather to give thanks for this dwelling and to pray for *those* who make it *their* home.

A reading from Proverbs: By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established;  
through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures. (Proverbs 24:3-4)

*or*

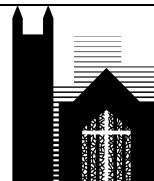
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### CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*in the heart of the city, welcomes all people  
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A reading from Isaiah: Be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating, says the Lord; for I am about to create Jerusalem as joy, and its people as a delight. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. (Isaiah 65:18, 21)

*or*

A reading from Matthew: Jesus said, Everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise householder who built a house on rock. (Matthew 7:24)

*A candle may be lighted, and these words may be spoken.*

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life.

*The people may move around the home, stopping in various places to read scripture and to pray. Or, the people may stay in one place and the leaders may move to various places.*

## WELCOME AND COMMUNITY

*Entering and leaving, such as the outside doors*

A reading from the Psalms: The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth and forevermore. (Psalm 121:8)

Let us pray. O God, watch over name/s in all *their* going out and *their* coming in; keep all evil away from *their* door; and let *them* share the hospitality of this home with all who visit, that those who enter here may know your love and peace. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*Welcoming guests, such as a chair for a visitor*

A reading from Romans: Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. (Romans 15: 7)

*or*

A reading from Acts: The Lord opened Lydia's heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my house." And she prevailed upon us. (Acts 16:14-15)

Let us pray. O God, bless all who visit this home; may they find here warmth and peace. Bless also name/s, who *welcome* them into *their* home, as you blessed Sarah and Abraham when they entertained angels unawares. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*Sharing of conversation and communal activities, such as a living room*

A reading from Acts: Then Paul went upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn; then he left. (Acts 20:11)

*or*

A reading from Ecclesiastes: So I commend enjoyment, for there is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat, and drink, and enjoy themselves, for this will go with them in their toil through the days of life that God gives them under the sun. (Ecclesiastes 8:15)

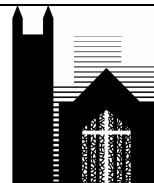
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Let us pray. O God, you set apart time for rest and enjoyment of the world you made. Bless those who gather here for fellowship and recreation, that they may be renewed and refreshed. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

## HOUSEHOLD WORK

*Studying and communicating with others, such as a computer station*

A reading from Proverbs: To get wisdom is to love oneself; to keep understanding is to prosper. (Proverbs 19:8)

*or*

A reading from Proverbs: Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. (Proverbs 25:25)

Let us pray. O God, you are the teacher who leads us to all truth. Grant that *those* who *study* and *learn* in this place may use knowledge to heal and help your world. Draw us together through our technology for every good purpose. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*Making or repairing things, such as a sewing area*

A reading from the Psalms: May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us; prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork. (Psalm 90:17)

Let us pray. O God, you are the source of our creativity. You fashioned our minds to imagine and our hands to shape new things. Prosper the work that is done in this place. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*Preparing meals*

A reading from Joel: I am sending you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied. Be glad and rejoice in the Lord your God. (Joel 2:19, 23)

*or*

A reading from John: When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." (John 21: 9, 12)

Let us pray. O God, you fill the hungry with good things. Send your blessing on *those* who *prepare* food here, and make us all ever thankful for daily bread. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

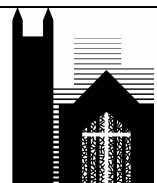
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## CARING FOR OURSELVES

*The gift of food, such as at a dining table*

A reading from the Psalms: The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord, and you give them their food in due season. You open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Psalm 145:15-16)

Let us pray. Blessed are you, Creator of heaven and earth, for you give us food and drink to sustain our lives and make our hearts glad. Make us grateful for all your mercies, and mindful of the needs of others. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*The gift of clothing, such as near a laundry area*

A reading from Exodus: So Moses went down from the mountain to the people. He consecrated the people, and they washed their clothes. (Exodus 19:14)

Let us pray. O God, you are our clothing, wrapping us in love. We bless you for the gift of clothing, and we pray that *all who live here/ name* may be clothed and blanketed in safety. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*The gift of caring for the body, such as near a bathroom or an exercise area*

A reading from the Psalms: You yourself created my inmost parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I will thank you because I am marvelously made; your works are wonderful, and I know it well. (Psalm 139:13-14)

Let us pray. O God, through the waters of baptism you raise us up and make us alive together with Christ. Let the waters of this room refresh and renew *all who use them/ name* in each new day. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*or*

Let us pray. O God, you revealed yourself in human flesh, making holy what is ordinary and earthly. Bless us as we care for our ordinary, marvelous bodies. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*The gift of rest, such as in a bedroom*

A reading from the Psalms: In peace, I will lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me rest secure. (Psalm 4:8)

Let us pray. Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.

**Amen.**

*For a couple*

A reading from the letter to the Colossians: Above all, clothe yourselves in love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. (Colossians 3:14-15)

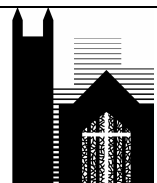
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Let us pray. O God, let your love be a seal upon the hearts of name and name, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads. Bless them in their companionship and in their rest, in their sleeping and in their waking. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*or*

Let us pray. O God, bless name and name in their waking and in their sleeping, and let them find in one another comfort, respect, and delight. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*For a child*

A reading from the Psalms: I will dwell in your house forever, O God; I will take refuge under the cover of your wings. (Psalm 61:4)

*or*

A reading from the Psalms: The Lord watches over you; God will not fall asleep. (Psalm 121:5, 3)

Let us pray. O God, hold name in your unfailing love. May *she/he* dream peacefully and grow in health and strength. Bring *her/him* in safety to each new day. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*For a teenager*

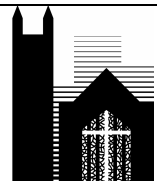
A reading from Jeremiah: "I will satisfy the weary, and all who are faint I will replenish," says the Lord. Thereupon I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me. (Jeremiah 31:25-26)

*or*

A reading from the Psalms: It is in vain to rise so early and go to bed so late. You, Lord, give sleep to your beloved. (Psalm 127:2)

Let us pray. O God, may name find here rest and respite, privacy and connection, challenge and enjoyment. And in all these things, may *she/he* hear you calling *her/him* by name. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**



## WORSHIP LIFE

### *Blessing the Home at Epiphany*

**Epiphany is a customary day to bless the home in the new year.** Here's a way to do this at your home: Whether you live alone or with others, gather inside or outside the front door. Perhaps with the aid of a stepstool, write over the door with chalk:

**20 + C + M + B + 07**

The numerals are those of the new year. C + M + B stand for the legendary names of the Magi – Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. (Although in some places, such as India, the Magi number 12 or even 70!) The chalk represents human flesh, created by God from clay, and is used as an emblem of the incarnation – God with us in Jesus.

C + M + B also stands for the Latin words *Chirstus, mansionem benedicat*: “Christ, bless this house.” Here’s an old rhyme to accompany the blessing:

Caspar, Melchior, Balthazar!  
Though the spring seems very far,  
    over us has ris’n a star.  
Though the cold grows stronger,  
    now the days grow longer.  
Though the world loves night,  
    Christ is born our light.

Some people do this writing over every threshold in the house. That’s appropriate in January, a month that literally means “doorway” – our entrance into another year of grace and life with Christ. Pause in each room, perhaps accompanied by a lit candle to give thanks for the activities that take place there. Hurrah for the kitchen! Hurrah for the bathrooms and bedrooms! And hurrah (especially) for the basement furnace!

*adapted: Mazar, Peter: Winter: Celebrating the Season in a Christian Home, LTP, Chicago, 1996, 44, 46.*

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